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The energy industry and OU Law:

A working partnership

BY JONELLA FRANK

Anyone familiar with Oklahoma knows the oil

and gas industry is important to the state. A drive past the Oklahoma State Capitol, with an oil derrick on its grounds, illustrates the point. About one-third of the state's \$150 billion economy is linked to the industry, according to Oklahoma Treasurer Ken Miller.

Not surprisingly, the oil and gas industry is also a major employer of graduates of the University of Oklahoma College of Law. "In recent years, the energy industry has been one of our top industries, employing more than 10 percent of our graduates each year," said Casey Delaney, director of the Office of Professional and Career Development.

Graduates use their legal educations working in a variety of capacities. Many OU Law grads have enjoyed successful and rewarding careers in the oil and gas industry, rising through the ranks to hold key leadership positions in their companies.

Four energy industry leaders — Anadarko Petroleum Corporation, Chesapeake Energy Corporation, Continental Resources Inc. and Devon Energy Corporation — consistently work with the OU College of Law to enhance the legal education experience available to students. From sponsoring and participating in programs coordinated by the OPCD, to funding student scholarships, to hiring students as interns and graduates as full-time employees, the continued support of these corporate energy partners, through gifts of financial and human resources, demonstrates their commitment to a first-class, affordable legal education.



Anadarko Petroleum Corporation, with its corporate office in The Woodlands, Texas, is a continuing supporter of the College of Law and its students. Anadarko Petroleum is an independent oil and natural gas exploration and production company with domestic and international onshore and deepwater production.

For a number of years, Anadarko hosted a reception following a presentation on employment in the energy industry coordinated by the OPCD. This year, Anadarko wanted to expand the event, so Chesapeake, Continental and Devon were asked to join as sponsors. The Meet the Energy Industry event was held in April in Oklahoma City's Bricktown with more than 130 attending.

The company annually provides Anadarko Petroleum Corporation Scholarships to OU Law students. The scholarships were established to provide students with a chance to explore various opportunities in one of the region's top energy companies, as well as assist in the cost of their legal education.

Anadarko Petroleum participates in the OPCD on-campus recruitment programs and hires summer interns for its Woodlands and Denver offices. In addition, the company underwrites the water bottles that are available at all OPCD events.

Four OU Law alumni currently work at Anadarko and two 2012 graduates will join the company in the fall. Current employees are Randle Jones ('83), lead counsel; Andrew Poole ('10), landman; Leslie Smith ('08), landman; and Deborah Hubbs ('06), landman. Members of the Class of 2012 who will soon join the company as landmen are Austin Brewer and Christopher Nesbitt.

Chesapeake Energy Corporation, with operations focused on discovering and developing unconventional natural gas and oil fields onshore in the United States, has been headquartered in Oklahoma City since its founding in 1989. Chesapeake maintains that the three key elements to success in the industry are people, land and science. It is in the first element — people — that Chesapeake and OU Law work cooperatively.

Chesapeake provides two lunchtime career information sessions coordinated by the OPCD. The fall semester presentation focuses on careers in the legal department and the spring session provides students with information about the land department. The company was also a sponsor of the 2012 Meet the Energy Industry event.

Chesapeake Energy has created a series of scholarships and endowments to encourage OU Law students to develop an interest in the oil and gas industry.

A participant in the on-campus recruitment programs, Chesapeake uses OU Law students as interns in its legal and land departments. In addition, the company traditionally is a table sponsor for the Oklahoma Law Review annual Honors Banquet.

Thirty-six graduates of the OU College of Law are employed by Chesapeake. Included in that number is a member of the Class of 1985, Henry J. Hood, who serves as senior vice president and general counsel.

Continental Resources Inc. recently moved its corporate headquarters to Oklahoma City from Enid, Oklahoma. Founded in 1967, Continental is an independent petroleum liquids exploration and production company whose growth strategy has focused on crude oil since the 1980s.

Continental's general counsel, Eric S. Eissenstat ('83), was the keynote speaker for Professionalism Day, coordinated by the OPCD and sponsored by McAfee & Taft. During the event, first-year students received information covering the various aspects of professionalism. Continental Resources also assisted the OPCD by co-sponsoring the Meet the Energy Industry event in April.

Continental Resources currently employs three OU Law alumni. Eissenstat, in addition to serving as general counsel, is also senior vice president and secretary. Other alumni include Michael Booze ('05), a Continental Resources landman, and Christa Evans ('11), investor relations project manager.

Devon Energy Corporation was founded in Oklahoma City in 1971 by John Nichols and his son Larry, the current executive chairman. Headquartered in Oklahoma City, Devon also has offices in Houston and Calgary, Alberta, Canada. The independent oil and natural gas exploration and production company operates exclusively onshore in North America from the Canadian Arctic to the Texas Gulf Coast.

Devon participates in the OPCD on-campus recruitment programs and its legal team interviews beginning second-year OU Law students, typically hiring at least one intern for its summer program. The company also annually co-sponsors, with Crowe & Dunlevy, Career Development Night, a program that provides students with a look at the differences between a law firm practice, a corporate practice and a government practice. Additionally, Devon joined other energy companies in sponsoring Meet the Energy Industry.

Devon employs 20 OU Law alumni in a variety of capacities. For details, please read "Devon's OU Law alumni: On the rise" on the following pages.

The College of Law values its relationships with leading companies in the energy industry and realizes the mutually beneficial aspects of those partnerships.

"OU College of Law has a rich heritage and tradition as one of the great law schools in the country in energy and natural resources law," said OU Law Dean Joe Harroz. "OU Law's expertise in energy and natural resources law would not be possible without the support of the energy companies, who support our course offerings, scholarships, internships and externships. Thanks to these partnerships, we are able to build on the successes of our past to provide unparalleled opportunities to our students."

Just as the relationship between the energy industry and the state of Oklahoma is strong and healthy, the partnership between these companies and the OU College of Law is thriving. | **SL** |